

CLAIMS

1. A nucleic acid characterized in that it has a transcriptional promoter activity and in that it comprises:
- (a) all or a portion of sequence SEQ ID n° 2 or a variant thereof; or
- (b) a sequence hybridising with all or part of the complementary strand of sequence SEQ ID n° 2.
2. A nucleic acid according to claim 1, characterized in that it comprises all or a portion of sequence SEQ ID n° 2.
3. A nucleic acid according to claim 1 ^{wherein the nucleic acid} ~~or claim 2, characterized in that it is~~ a promoter of the gene for the beta 2 toxin of *Clostridium perfringens* or a fragment thereof.
4. A cassette for expression of a transgene, ^{wherein} ~~characterized in that~~ it comprises, in the 5' → 3' direction:
- a nucleic acid according to claim 1; and
 - said transgene.
5. An expression cassette according to claim 4, ^{wherein} ~~characterized in that~~ it further comprises a transcriptional terminator at the 3' end of the transgene.
6. ^{the} An expression cassette according to claim 4 ~~or claim 5, characterized in that~~ ^{comprising} it further comprises a secretion signal between the nucleic acid and the transgene.
7. An expression cassette according to ~~any one of claims 4, 5 or 6,~~ ^{wherein} ~~characterized in that~~ the transgene codes for a toxin or a fragment or a variant of the toxin.
8. An expression cassette according to claim 7, ^{wherein} ~~characterized in that~~ the transgene codes for a toxin or a fragment or variant of a toxin of a pathogenic bacterium.
9. A vector comprising a nucleic acid according to claim 1 ~~or an expression cassette according to claim 4.~~
10. A vector according to claim 9, ^{wherein} ~~characterized in that~~ it is functional in bacteria.

11. A vector according to claim 10, ^{wherein} ~~characterized in that~~ it is functional in bacteria of the genus *Clostridium*, in particular in *Clostridium perfringens* bacteria.
12. A recombinant cell comprising a nucleic acid according to claim 1 ~~or an expression cassette according to claim 4 or a vector according to claim 9.~~
13. A cell according to claim 12, ^{wherein} ~~characterized in that~~ it is a prokaryote cell, preferably a bacterium.
14. A process for producing a polypeptide, comprising introducing into a host cell a transgene coding for said polypeptide under the control of a promoter as defined in claim 1, then recovering said polypeptide.
15. A process for producing a polypeptide, ^{comprising} ~~characterized in that it comprises~~ culturing a recombinant cell according to claim 12, ^{wherein the} ~~comprising an expression cassette according to claim 4 or a vector according to claim 9, the transgene coding for said polypeptide.~~
16. A process according to claim 14, ^{wherein} ~~or claim 15, characterized in that~~ the cell is a bacterium from the genus *Clostridium*.
17. A process according to ~~any one of claims 14, 15, 16~~ ^{wherein said process produces} for producing a toxin or a toxoid.
18. Use of a nucleic acid according to claim 1 for producing polypeptides.
19. A nucleic acid comprising all or a portion of sequence SEQ ID n° 3.
20. A process for preparing an immunogenic composition comprising the following steps:
- expressing one or more toxins (or the corresponding toxoids) in a cell according to claim 12;
 - harvesting the supernatant;
 - optionally, treating the supernatant to purify or concentrate the toxin(s) or toxoid(s);
 - inactivating the toxin(s); and
 - optionally, packaging the inactivated toxin(s) or toxoid(s).
21. An immunogenic composition comprising a toxoid of a toxin produced according to the process ^{of} ~~of~~ claim 17.

22. An immunogenic composition comprising a toxoid of a recombinant beta 2 toxin.
23. Essentially purified recombinant beta 2 toxin.

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C₂

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